

Message Text

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SUBJ: NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT& MANAGEMENT FOUNDATION (NDMF)
HOLDS CONFERENCE ON PROBLEMS OF URBAN AFRICAN WORKERS

1. NDMF SPONSORED DAY-LONG CONFERENCE IN JOHANNESBURG AUGUST 2 FOR PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING PROBLEMS OF URBAN AFRICAN WORKERS. DEPUTY MINISTER OF BANTU ADMINISTRATION & DEVELOPMENT TEUNIS (PUNT) JANSON GAVE PRINCIPAL ADDRESS & TWO OTHER SCHEDULED SPEAKERS, ONE WHITE AND ONE BLACK, ARTICULATED EMPLOYER & AFRICAN POINTS OF VIEW. SEVERAL MEMBERS OF WEST RAND BANTU ADMINISTRATION BOARD, INCLUDING CHAIRMAN MANIE MULDER, ATTENDED CONFERENCE & LATTER OBLIGED WITH INTERESTING END-OF-DAY EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEECH.

2. JANSON USED OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP FURTHER HIS THESIS THAT GOVERNMENT& EMPLOYERS MUST WORK TOGETHER, FIRST, TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY OF URBAN AFRICAN WORKERS BY OFFERING MORE AND BETTER TRAINING AND, SECOND, TO TAKE STEPS TO ENSURE THAT URBAN AFRICANS ARE QTE HAPPY UNQTE DURING THEIR STAY IN WHITE SOUTH AFRICA. HE SAID SAG PREPARED PLAY MAJOR ROLE IN PROVIDING BASIC SKILLS TRAINING IN VERY LIMITED NUMBER OF AFRICAN SCHOOLS AND,
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IN ENHANCING AFRICAN QTE HAPPINESS UNQTE VIA NEW BANTU ADMIN-

ISTRATION BOARDS BUT TOOK POSITION THAT MUCH OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROVIDING MORE SPECIFIC JOB-RELATED TRAINING AS WELL AS OFF-HOUR QTE HAPPINESS UNQTE INFRASTRUCTURE RESTED WITH EMPLOYERS. IN DISCUSSING ROLE OF VAN ZYL INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON TRAINING OF AFRICAN WORKERS HE SAID THAT WHILE HE WAS NOT IN POSITION TO GIVE PROGRESS REPORT ON WORK OF COMMITTEE, HE WANTED TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT NEW EMPHASIS ON PROVIDING TRAINING IN WHITE AREAS RATHER THAN HOMELANDS FOR BLACK WORKERS DID NOT REPRESENT CHANGE IN SAG POLICY BUT MERELY INDICATED DETERMINATION TO QTE GET ON WITH THE JOB UNQTE. IN ANSWER TO QUESTION FROM FLOOR ON INFLUX CONTROL HE SAID SAG HAD NO INTENTION OF RELAXING INFLUX CONTROL BECAUSE TO DO SO WOULD RESULT IN OVERSUPPLY OF CHEAP LABOR AND THEREFORE WORK AGAINST INTERESTS OF AFRICANS THEMSELVES. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT ONE OF PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF BANTU ADMINISTRATION BOARDS WILL BE TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS OF INCREASING MOBILITY OF AFRICAN WORKERS, INCLUDING MOBILITY WHEN NECESSARY ACROSS BOARD JURISDICTIONAL LINES. IN ANSWER TO QUESTION ABOUT TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES BETWEEN HOMELANDS AND WORK SITES IN WHITE AREAS HE SAID PRINCIPAL PROBLEM WAS FINANCIAL. HE CITED EXAMPLE OF PROPOSED THIRTEEN MILE RAIL LINE BETWEEN PRETORIA AND NEARBY SECTION OF BOPHUTHATSWANA ESTIMATED COST OF WHICH IS R82,000,000.

3. EMPLOYER SPOKESMAN C. F. HEILMANN, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF METAL BOX COMPANY, GENERALLY ENDORSED JANSON'S POINT ABOUT NEED FOR GOVERNMENT-EMPLOYER COOPERATION IN TRAINING AND INCREASING HAPPINESS OF URBAN AFRICAN BUT WENT ON TO DISCUSS ADDITIONAL NEED TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH AFRICAN EMPLOYEES. WHILE HINTING THAT HE WAS INCLINED TO FAVOR WORKS COMMITTEES IF ONLY THEY FUNCTIONED MORE EFFECTIVELY, HE ENDED HIS REMARKS WITH SOMEWHAT GRUDGING ENDORSEMENT OF SOME FORM OF AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS.

4. AFRICAN SPOKESMAN BEN MOKOATLE, PERSONNEL OFFICER OF SOUTH AFRICAN BREWERIES, MADE IMPRESSIVE EFFORT IN HIS FORMAL REMARKS TO DESCRIBE PSYCHOLOGY OF URBAN AFRICAN ONLY TO RECEIVE SUCH SIMPLISTIC AND UNCOMPREHENDING QUESTIONS FROM FLOOR AS QTE WHY DO BLACKS QUIT ME AND GO TO WORK FOR SOMEBODY ELSE FOR LESS PAY? UNQTE AND QTE WHY DO BLACKS REGARD WORKS COMMITTEES AS A JOKE AND ELECT BUMS TO SERVE ON THEM? UNQTE. IN ANSWER TO QUESTION ON WAYS AND MEANS OF IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EMPLOYERS AND AFRICAN EMPLOYEES, MOKOATLE PREDICTED THAT, SOONER OR LATER, IN EFFORT TO RESOLVE PROBLEM SAG WOULD EXTEND TRADE UNION RIGHTS TO AFRICAN WORKERS.

5. MR. MULDER SAID ONE OF MORE IMPORTANT TASKS OF BANTU ADMINISTRATION BOARDS WOULD BE TO INCREASE MOBILITY OF QTE TRAINED UNQTE AFRICAN WORKERS. HE SAID QTE WE MUST SEE TO IT THAT BANTU WORKERS ARE HAPPY DURING THE SIXTEEN HOURS THEY ARE NOT WORKING

UNQTE AND HE PROPOSED DOING THIS BY PROVIDING BETTER RECREATION AND SPORTS FACILITIES AND BY GIVING EACH AFRICAN A QTE BIT OF LAND UNQTE BACK IN THE HOMELAND. HE EMPHASIZED THAT BANTU ADMINISTRATION BOARDS WILL BE BETTER EQUIPPED THAN LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH PROBLEMS OF URBAN AFRICAN BECAUSE IMPROVING WELFARE OF LATTER CONSTITUTES BOARD'S QTE ONE AND ONLY TASK. UNQTE.

6. COMMENT: EVEN WHEN SPEAKERS AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS IN CONFERENCE REFERRED AS SOME DID TO QTE SELF-HELP UNQTE AND NEED TO HELP URBAN AFRICAN QTE HELP HIMSELF UNQTE THEY DID IT WITH SUCH LOFTY CONDESCENSION THAT IT WAS OBVIOUS THEY HAD LITTLE OR NO IDEA OF REAL MEANING OR SIGNIFICANCE OF WORDS AND PHRASES THEY WERE

ARTICULATING. EVEN MORE ENLIGHTENED-SEEMING PARTICIPANTS ATTRIBUTED GOOD RELATIONS THEY CLAIMED TO BE ENJOYING WITH AFRICAN WORKERS TO THINGS THEY HAD GIVEN THEM OR HAD DONE QTE FOR UNQTE THEM. THERE WAS LITTLE OR NO INDICATION DESPITE CONSIDERABLE PIOUS-SOUNDING RHETORIC THAT ANYONE HAD EVER SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED DOING ANYTHING QTE WITH UNQTE AFRICAN WORKERS FOR REASONS WHICH WERE SIGNIFICANT IN AFRICAN TERMS. LEAVING MORALS, ETHICS, AND IDEALS ENTIRELY TO ONE SIDE, HOWEVER, IT IS WELL WORTH NOTING THAT ONE OF PRINCIPAL PRACTICAL PROBLEMS WITH PARTERNALISM OF SORT EXHIBITED AT CONFERENCE IS THAT IF IT REMAINS UNCHANGED IT IS VIRTUALLY GUARANTEED TO FAIL IN LONG-RUN AS MEANS OF IMPROVING HUMAN RELATIONS. CONSPICIOUS BY ITS ABSENCE AS TOPIC OF CONVERSATION AT CONFEREMCE WAS QUESTION

OF POVERTY DATUM LINE AND WHAT CONSTITUTES LIVING WAGE FOR URBAN AFRICAN WORKERS.
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